

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-5 are all the claims which have been examined. Claims 1-5 are rejected.

By this Amendment, Applicant has amended claim 1, and added new claims 6 and 7. Hence, claims 1-7 are all the claims pending in the Application.

***Preliminary Matters***

Applicant thanks the Examiner for considering and initialing the Information Disclosure Statement filed June 6, 2006.

***Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102***

Claims 1-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly anticipated by Saito (WO 02/43975, hereinafter “Saito”; all citations will be to the corresponding US Patent, 7,017,633 to Yamaguchi et al.). Applicant respectfully traverses.

Applicant notes preliminarily that Saito is the same reference described at length in the Background section of the instant application, and is assigned on its face to Bridgestone.

Regarding claim 1, the Examiner asserts that Saito anticipates the feature of a curve of tensile force with “an upward sloping shape smoothly increasing with the increase of the elongation in the side region thereof,” as the claim does not specify that the entirety of the stress-strain curve is so shaped.

Applicant submits that, as the Examiner seems to acknowledge, Saito does not disclose that the crown and side regions of the air bladder follow different stress-strain curves. See Saito FIG. 2. In order to clarify this difference, by this Amendment Applicant amends claim 1 to

specify that the crown and side portions follow different stress-strain curves, with correspondingly different shapes.

Applicant submits that amended claim 1 is patentable over the cited art, and requests that the rejection be withdrawn. Applicant further submits that claims 2-5 are patentable over the cited art at least by virtue of their respective dependencies.

### ***New Claims***

By this Amendment, Applicant adds new claims 6 and 7 to more particularly claim the invention disclosed in the present application. Applicant submits that new claims 6 and 7 have support in the present specification at least in FIG. 2.

As noted above, the Examiner asserts that claim 1 does not specify the tensile force curve for the side region is “smoothly increasing” over its entirety. New claims 6 and 7 specify that the tensile force curve for the side region is “smoothly increasing” at least from zero to fifty percent. Applicant submits that, as seen in Saito FIG. 2, this feature is not taught or suggested in the prior art. Therefore, Applicant submits that claims 6 and 7 are patentable for at least this reason. Applicant also submits that claim 6 is patentable at least by virtue of its dependency from claim 1.

### ***Conclusion***

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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